

## **IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph extending from page 6, line 19 through page 7, line 13 as follows.

Refer now to FIGURE 2 which illustrates a data processing system 200 in accordance with the principles of the present invention. System 200 may be used in an embodiment of a client(s) 102 and server 106. System 200 may include a central processing unit (CPU) 210 coupled to various other components by system bus 212. An operating system ~~[[240]]~~ 230 runs on CPU 210 and provides control and coordinates the function of the various components in FIGURE 2. Application ~~[[250]]~~ 240 includes instructions for parsing markup language character streams including instructions for validating characters therein in accordance with the principles of the present invention, and which will be described further in conjunction further with FIGURES 3 and 4 hereinbelow. It would be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that the operations performed by the instructions for parsing character streams would be similar in a client-side embodiment of system 200 and a server-side embodiment of system 200. Application ~~[[250]]~~ 240 runs in conjunction with operating system ~~[[240]]~~ 230, which coordinates the internal functions of server 106, as would be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art. Additionally, read only memory (ROM) 216 is coupled to system bus 212 and includes a basic input/output system (BIOS) that control certain basic functions of data processing system 200. Random access memory (RAM) 214, disk adapter 218 and communications adapter 234 are also coupled to system bus 212. It should be noted that software components including operating system ~~[[240]]~~ 230 and application ~~[[250]]~~ 240 are loaded into RAM 214 which is the computer systems main memory. Disk adapter 218 may be a Universal Serial Bus (USB) or other adapter that communicates with disk units 220. It is noted that the program of the present invention may reside in disk unit 220 and loaded into RAM 214 by operating system ~~[[240]]~~ 230, as required.

Communications adapter 234 ~~interconnect~~ interconnects bus 212 with a network, such as network 110, FIGURE 1.

Please amend the paragraph extending from page 9, line 28 through page 10, line 10 as follows:

Returning to FIGURE 3, in step 308, a validity value is tested. In an embodiment of the present invention in accordance with an array 400, FIGURE 4, the validity value may be a logical combination of status values. For example, in such an embodiment, the logical OR of the attribute values may be used. If, in step 310, the validity value denotes that the pointer value represents a valid character, is TRUE, or "1" then in step 312, the attribute values may, optionally, be read from the table. In step 314 it is determined if all characters in the stream have been similarly validated. If not, process 300 proceeds to the next character, step 316, and returns to step 304 to continue validating characters in the stream. Otherwise, all characters have been validated, in step 318, the syntactic rules for the markup language are applied to the character stream. In applying the syntactic rules in step 316, the attributes optionally retrieved in step [[311]] 312, if any, may be used. For example, if the character is a combining character, the character may be, in accordance with XML, be associated with a namespace prefix.